

Irenaeus in *Against Heresies* book 3, chapter 3, verse 4

(Irenaeus was born in Smyrna in 130 AD and died in 202 AD. Irenaeus became bishop in Gaul He wrote extensively as an apologist and refuted heresies.)

“**Polycarp** also was not only instructed by apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ, but was also, by apostles in Asia, appointed bishop of the Church in Smyrna, whom I also saw in my early youth, for he tarried [on earth] a very long time, and, when a very old man, gloriously and most nobly suffering martyrdom, departed this life, having always taught the things which he had learned from the apostles, and which the Church has handed down, and which alone are true. To these things all the Asiatic Churches testify, as do also those men who have succeeded Polycarp down to the present time, a man who was of much greater weight, and a more steadfast witness of truth, than Valentinus, and Marcion, and the rest of the heretics. He it was who, coming to Rome in the time of Anicetus caused many to turn away from the aforesaid heretics to the Church of God, proclaiming that he had received this one and sole truth from the apostles, that, namely, which is handed down by the Church. There are also those who heard from him that **John**, the disciple of the Lord, going to bathe at Ephesus, and perceiving **Cerinthus** within, rushed out of the bath-house without bathing, exclaiming, “Let us fly, lest even the bath-house fall down, because Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is within.” And **Polycarp** himself replied to **Marcion**, who met him on one occasion, and said, “Dost thou know me?” “I do know thee, the first-born of Satan.” Such was the horror which the apostles and their disciples had against holding even verbal communication with any corrupters of the truth; as Paul also says, “A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” There is also a very powerful Epistle of Polycarp written to the Philippians, from which those who choose to do so, and are anxious about their salvation, can learn the character of his faith, and the preaching of the truth. Then, again, the ***Church in Ephesus, founded by Paul, and having John remaining among them permanently until the times of Trajan, is a true witness of the tradition of the apostles.***”

(Cerinthus was alive in the first century during the days of John. According to Irenæus, Cerinthus was a man educated in the wisdom of the Egyptians, claimed [angelic](#) inspiration. Cerinthus came to Asia and spread his false teaching in the Asian churches. Cerinthus taught an early form of Gnosticism.)